

APR 6 2005



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
PROGRAM PLANNING AND INTEGRATION
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

To All Interested Government Agencies and Public Groups:

Under the National Environmental Policy Act, an environmental review has been performed on the following action.

TITLE: Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact - Jordan Property/Hylebos Creek Off-Channel Restoration Project

LOCATION: The Jordan Property/Hylebos Creek Off-Channel Restoration Project at Commencement Bay; Fife, Washington

SUMMARY: The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is the lead federal agency for National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance for the Jordan Property/Hylebos Creek Off-Channel Restoration Project, Commencement Bay, Fife, Washington. This project is sponsored by the Commencement Bay Natural Resource Trustees and designed to help restore natural resources injured by the releases of hazardous substances or discharges of oil in Commencement Bay, Tacoma, Washington.

NOAA prepared this Environmental Assessment (EA) to set forth: (1) its decision-making authority for this project, (2) its determination that an alternative (Alternative 6a, Meandering Creek Transition to Dendritic Marsh) other than the No Action Alternative or the more technical or intensive alternatives would be the most ecologically sound alternative, and (3) its determination that an environmental impact statement (EIS) will not need to be prepared for this project.

The Trustees determined that regrading six acres of property along Hylebos Creek to create channels, backwater pools, and saltwater marshes using locally appropriate native plant communities would serve as rearing and feeding habitat for fish and wildlife species in the area as well as for juvenile salmon outmigrating in the Creek, including chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), a listed species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA; 50 CFR 223). The public and other interested parties have participated during public meetings in the evaluation of this site.

The project will be constructed in compliance with all permits required by the State and Federal regulatory agencies. The Biological Assessment for the project, and the informal consultations (National Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service addressing ESA and Essential Fish Habitat) for the Jordan Property/Hylebos Creek Off-Channel Restoration Project are part of the Administrative Record for this project. The proposed activities were evaluated under the goals and objectives and other evaluation criteria specified by the Commencement Bay NRDA Restoration Plan and with the evaluation factors under the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR 1508.27). Based on a review of all of these factors and the referenced documents, NOAA and the Trustees concur with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the City of Tacoma



NOAA and the Trustees concur with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the City of Tacoma that the proposed activities would not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment.

The environmental review process has led NOAA to conclude that this restoration action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment, and NOAA is issuing a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). Therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared. A copy of the FONSI, including the EA, is available upon request to the Responsible Official listed below.

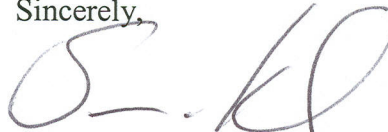
RESPONSIBLE

OFFICIAL: William T. Hogarth, Ph.D.
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries
NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910

We encourage electronic submission of your comments on this EA, but written comments are also acceptable. If you wish to submit comments, please send them either electronically by email to gail.e.siani@noaa.gov, or by U.S. mail to:

Gail Siani, Case Coordinator
NOAA GC-Natural Resources, NW
7600 Sand Point Way, NE
Seattle, WA 98115

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be "S. Kennedy", written over a horizontal line.

Susan A. Kennedy
Acting NEPA Coordinator

Enclosure

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
FOR THE JORDAN PROPERTY/HYLEBOS CREEK OFF-CHANNEL
HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT
COMMENCEMENT BAY, TACOMA, WASHINGTON

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is the lead federal agency for National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance for the Jordan Property/Hylebos Creek Off-Channel Habitat Restoration Project, Commencement Bay, Tacoma, Washington. This project is sponsored by the Commencement Bay Natural Resource Trustees and designed to help restore natural resources injured by the releases of hazardous substances or discharges of oil in Commencement Bay, Tacoma, Washington.

NOAA prepared this Environmental Assessment (EA) to set forth: (1) its decision-making authority for this project, (2) its determination that an alternative (Alternative 6a, Meandering Creek Transition to Dendritic Marsh) other than the No Action Alternative or the more technical or intensive alternatives would be the most ecologically sound alternative, and (3) its determination that an environmental impact statement (EIS) will not need to be prepared for this project.

The Trustees determined that regrading six acres of property along Hylebos Creek to create channels, backwater pools, and saltwater marshes using locally appropriate native plant communities would serve as rearing and feeding habitat for fish and wildlife species in the area as well as for juvenile salmon outmigrating in the Creek, including chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), a listed species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA; 50 CFR 223). The public and other interested parties have participated during public meetings in the evaluation of this site.

The project will be constructed in compliance with all permits required by the State and Federal regulatory agencies. The Biological Assessment for the project, and the informal consultations (National Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service addressing ESA and Essential Fish Habitat) for the Jordan Property/Hylebos Creek Off-Channel Restoration Project are part of the Administrative Record for this project. The proposed activities were evaluated under the goals and objectives and other evaluation criteria specified by the Commencement Bay NRDA Restoration Plan and with the evaluation factors under the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR 1508.27). Based on a review of all of these factors and the referenced documents, NOAA and the Trustees concur with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the City of Tacoma that the proposed activities would not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Therefore NOAA concludes that an EIS would not need to be prepared.

DETERMINATION:

Based upon an environmental review and evaluation of the Environmental Assessment for the Jordan Property/Hylebos Creek Off-Channel Restoration Project, I have determined that the proposed action does not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental

Policy Act of 1969, as amended. Accordingly, an environmental impact statement is not required for this project.

William T. Hogarth

William T. Hogarth, Ph.D.

Assistant Administrator for Fisheries

National Marine Fisheries Service

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

3/28/05

Date